



HR0048

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives recognize that over the last 150 years,
4 beginning with the Emancipation Proclamation, African
5 Americans have made strides and advancements toward equality;
6 the Civil Rights Movement enabled groundbreaking legislation
7 such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965; today, we pay annual
8 tribute to one of the pioneers and most prominent stars of the
9 Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; however,
10 there is still much work to be done particularly as it relates
11 to the economic disparity in too many African American
12 communities; and

13 WHEREAS, We recognize that communities throughout Illinois
14 are struggling under the weight of many economic and social
15 problems including unemployment, poverty, mortgage
16 foreclosures, deficiencies in public health services, and
17 crime; and

18 WHEREAS, These economic and societal challenges created or
19 exacerbated conditions which include inequalities in access to
20 justice in the civil court system, an overburdened and
21 ineffective criminal justice system, overcrowding conditions
22 in correctional facilities, increased homelessness, increases
23 in teen pregnancy, inadequate educational opportunities, a

1 lack of affordable housing, insufficient delivery of social
2 services to the less fortunate, and deficiencies in the
3 delivery of public health services; and

4 WHEREAS, Although unemployment is a lingering problem for
5 the economy as a whole, a recent study revealed that the recent
6 unemployment rate for blacks in Illinois was 17.5%, compared to
7 8.2% for whites, and 9.8% for all workers; and

8 WHEREAS, 75.5% of homicide victims in the State of Illinois
9 are black, and in the first 6 months of 2012, when there was a
10 38% increase in the homicide rate, 77.6% of homicide victims in
11 the City of Chicago were black; and

12 WHEREAS, The teen birth rate in the United States was
13 recently 38.1 births for every 1,000 teens, but in a comparable
14 time period in Illinois the teen birth rate was 77.9 births for
15 every 1,000 teens for black teens, while the white teen birth
16 rate was 20.6 per every 1,000 teens; and

17 WHEREAS, The inmate population in the Illinois
18 Correctional system is approximately 58% black, and the high
19 proportion of young black males with criminal convictions is a
20 well-recognized phenomenon; and

21 WHEREAS, Black leaders in Illinois are not alone in

1 recognizing that these broad social problems often strike the
2 hardest in the black community; and

3 WHEREAS, It is painful for the black leaders to ponder the
4 stories of human struggle, despair, and hurt that all too often
5 over shadow the stories of success and hope; and

6 WHEREAS, State government resources are expended in
7 ever-increasing amounts to address these social and economic
8 problems and those expenditures are a significant drain on the
9 State's road to financial stability; and

10 WHEREAS, State government, taxpayers, members of the
11 General Assembly, and the black community could benefit from
12 the creation of an action plan that identifies: what
13 modifications could be made to existing State of Illinois
14 programs, including those statutory and regulatory changes to
15 the current laws and regulations in Illinois that could
16 dramatically improve the delivery of services and also reduce
17 wasteful spending, how leadership programs and new educational
18 opportunities will foster and equip new leadership in the black
19 community, and ways in which State government may actively
20 create a change environment that will have positive impacts on
21 the many social problems that exist in Illinois, especially in
22 the black community; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
3 we urge the Governor to create a commission, composed of
4 stakeholders in the communities where these problems continue
5 to devastated families, representatives of appropriate State
6 agencies, ministers, business leaders, and all community
7 appropriate stake holders to explore, discuss, and coordinate
8 efforts to prepare an action plan to offer enhanced State
9 governmental services in a meaningful way, foster leadership in
10 communities, and create programs that can foster success in
11 addressing the myriad of social and economic problems in the
12 affected communities; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That we urge that the Governor appoint members of
14 the commission by August 1, 2013 so as to allow the commission
15 to hold its first meeting soon after the appointments; and be
16 it further

17 RESOLVED, That the commission be charged with: finding and
18 creating innovative means to address and meet the numerous
19 needs of the black community, designing plans to assist and
20 enhance the efforts of State agencies and local governments
21 that serve blacks in communities throughout the State,
22 analyzing other successful State and local governmental
23 programs in law enforcement, job retraining, education,
24 economic opportunity, job creation, social services, and

1 public health, and developing an action plan that includes
2 information about changes and improvements to existing
3 programs that can be made without allocating additional tax
4 dollars to the programs by reallocating existing resources; and
5 be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we urge the commission to hold public
7 hearings and issue a written report of its findings and
8 recommendations to the Governor and to the General Assembly on
9 or before December 30, 2013; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 delivered to Governor Pat Quinn.